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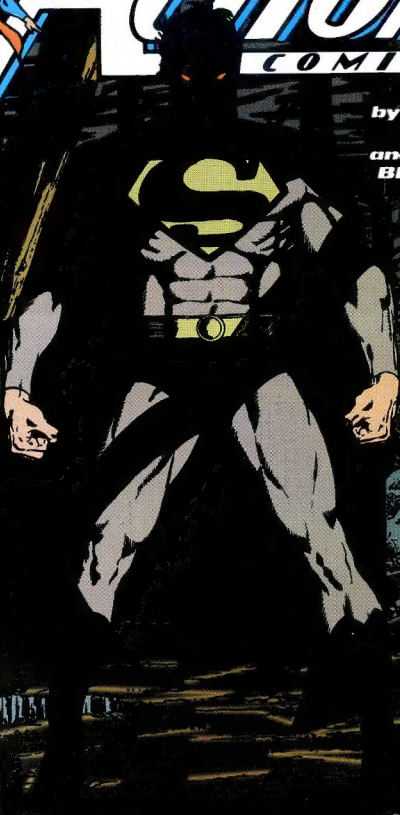
SUPERMAN

FEATURED IN

ACTION

COMICS

by **GEORGE
PÉREZ**
and **BRETT
BREEDING**



IT'S BEEN
A BUSY
WEEK FOR...

SUPERMAN[®]

Created by
JERRY SIEGEL &
JOE SHUSTER

SINCE RETURNING TO EARTH AFTER MONTHS
IN SPACE, THE MAN OF STEEL HAS RESCUED
A CITY FROM A KILLER ROBOT AND A GROUP
OF YOUNG CHILDREN FROM A BODY-ALTERING
CURSE.

AND NOW, AFTER A NIGHT SPENT
STOPPING A HORDE OF INTER-
GANG THUGS, OUR WORLD'S
GREATEST LIVING HERO ONCE
AGAIN DEFERS HIS REST TO
ANSWER THE CALL OF AN
OLD AND DEAR FRIEND...

I COULD
HEAR THE WORRY
IN LANA'S VOICE!
SHE WOULDN'T
SAY MUCH OVER
THE PHONE--

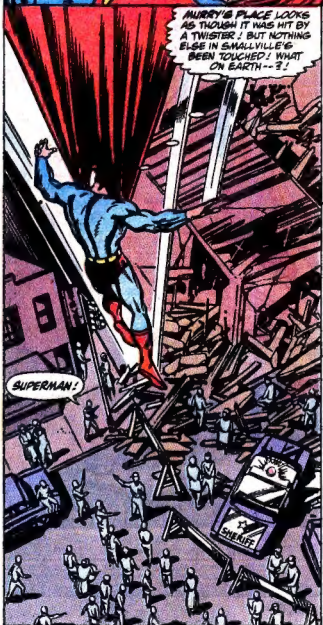
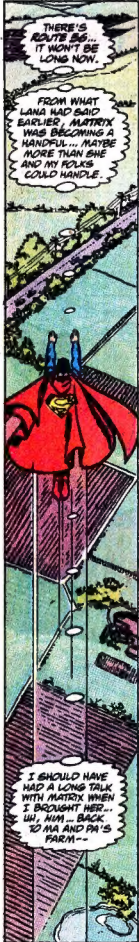
--BUT SOMETHING'S
GONE VERY WRONG
BACK HOME IN
SMALLVILLE!

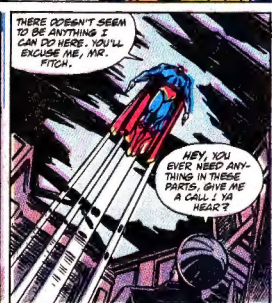
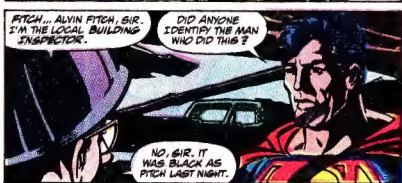
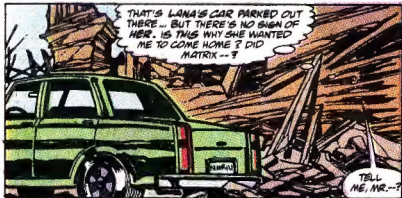
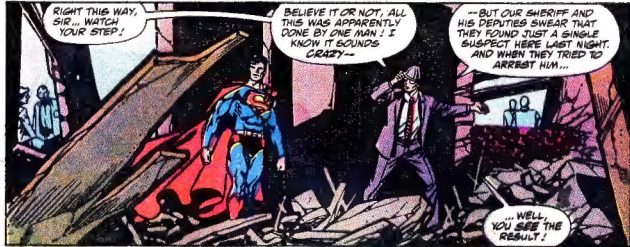
DOPPELGANGER

Story by ROGER STERN | Art by GEORGE PEREZ | Lettering by BILL OAKLEY | Assoc. Editor J. PETERSON | Editing by
GEORGE PEREZ | BRETT BREEDING | coloring by GLENN WHITMORE | MIKE CARLIN

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WOW!
LOOKIT
"I'M GO!"

WONDER
WHAT
BRINGS HIM
BACK?*

DON'T
RIGHTLY
KNOW. BUT
AFTER WHAT
HAPPENED TO
MURRY'S...

*Superman saved the lives of half the town in ISSUE #596.

"... I SURE HOPE HE STICKS AROUND AND FINDS THE CULPRIT!"

IT HAD TO BE MATRIX...



...BUT WHY WOULD HE TRASH AN OLD TOWN NIGHT SPOT? IS "HE" EVEN THE PROPER TERM? THERE'S SO MUCH ABOUT MATRIX THAT DEFIES DEFINITION.



"HE WAS A 'SHE' WHEN I FIRST MET... HER... NOT ALL THAT FAR FROM HERE..."

I'M NO ILLUSION, SUPERMAN-- I'M SUPERGIRL!

"DESPITE HER COSTUME, HER POWERS WERE VERY DIFFERENT FROM MINE. HER STRENGTH WAS MAINLY PSYCHOKINETIC IN NATURE, AND SHE COULD RENDER HERSELF INDETECTABLE TO EVEN MY SENSES!"



"SHE APPEARED HUMAN-- BUT SHE HAD, IN FACT, BEEN CREATED IN A LABORATORY..."

"... FROM ARTIFICIAL PROTOMATTER THAT COULD DUPLICATE THE HUMAN FORM RIGHT DOWN TO THE MOLECULAR LEVEL!"

"SHE'D COME TO ENLIST MY AID ON BEHALF OF A DYING WORLD..."



"... BUT WE WERE TOO LATE. SHE WAS INJURED, AND REVERTED BACK TO HER ORIGINAL FORM."

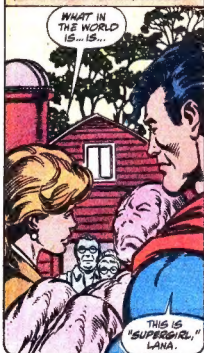


"SHE WAS HER WORLD'S ONLY SURVIVOR... I COULDN'T LEAVE HER THERE TO DIE."

"SO, I BROUGHT HER HOME TO SMALLVILLE--"

"--TO THE THREE PEOPLE I FELT WERE BEST QUALIFIED TO GIVE HER A SECOND CHANCE AT LIFE."

WHAT IN THE WORLD IS... IS...



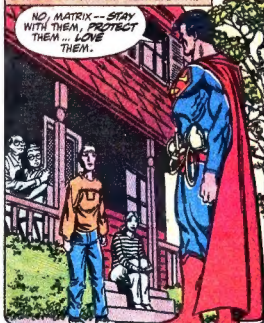
THIS IS "SUPERGIRL," LANA.

"LANA HAD EVERY RIGHT TO BE FRIGHTENED, BUT AS SHE LOOKED DOWN AT MATRIX, I COULD SEE HER FEAR MELT AWAY. I KNEW THEN THAT MATRIX WOULD BE IN GOOD HANDS."



"FUNNY... IT WAS WHILE MATRIX WAS REGENERATING THAT MY OWN LIFE SEEMED TO BE FALLING APART!"

"I DIDN'T THINK IT WAS SAFE FOR ME TO BE AROUND PEOPLE ANYMORE... I FELT THAT I HAD TO GET AWAY FROM EARTH..."

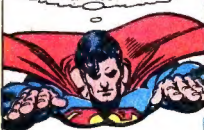


NO, MATRIX--STAY WITH THEM, PROTECT THEM... LOVE THEM.

"I REMEMBER THE LOOK ON MATRIX'S FACE AS I LEFT... SHE WAS LOOKING FAIRLY HUMAN AGAIN, IF A TRIFLE CONFUSED..."



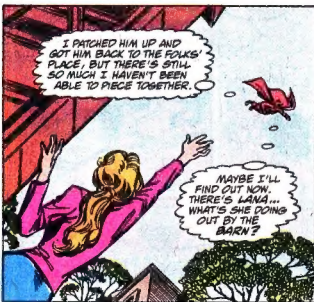
EVEN SO, I NEVER SUSPECTED THAT MATRIX WOULD DECIDE TO PROTECT MY FAMILY BY BECOMING CLARK KENT! I DON'T KNOW WHICH WAS THE BIGGER SURPRISE--



"--THAT MATRIX WAS LIVING UNDER MY OTHER IDENTITY... OR THAT HE SOMEHOW SET OFF AN EXPLOSION IN MY APARTMENT!"



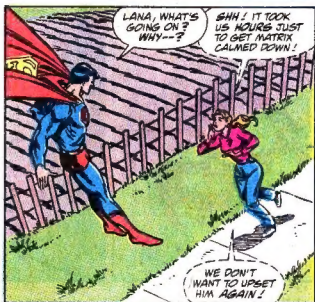
I PATCHED HIM UP AND GOT HIM BACK TO THE FOLKS' PLACE, BUT THERE'S STILL SO MUCH I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE TO PIECE TOGETHER.



MAYBE I'LL FIND OUT NOW. THERE'S LANA... WHAT'S SHE DOING OUT BY THE BARN?

LANA, WHAT'S GOING ON? WHY--?

SHH! IT TOOK US HOURS JUST TO GET MATRIX CALMED DOWN!



WE DON'T WANT TO UPSET HIM AGAIN!



LANA, I SAW YOUR CAR BEHIND WHAT WAS LEFT OF MURRY'S PLACE ... WHAT IS GOING ON?

I'M NOT SURE, I FOUND MURRY'S LAST NIGHT, AND TALKED HIM DOWN FROM HIS RAMPAGE. THEN HE FLEW ME BACK HERE, MUTTERING SOMETHING ABOUT "INTERGANG."

CLARK, HE REALLY THINKS HE'S YOU!



YOUR PARENTS AND I HAVE BEEN TRYING TO REASON WITH HIM, BUT--! LOOK, I'D BETTER GET BACK INSIDE.

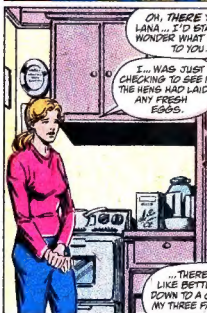
GO ON...

... I'LL WATCH THINGS FROM OUT HERE.



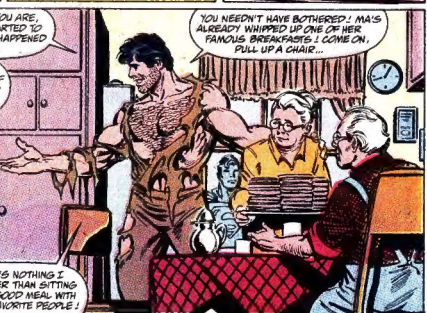
INTERGANG... WHY WOULD HE BE TALKING ABOUT INTERGANG?

GOOD LORD.



OH, THERE YOU ARE, LANA... I'D STARTED TO WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU.

I... WAS JUST CHECKING TO SEE IF THE HENS HAD LAID ANY FRESH EGGS.



YOU NEEDN'T HAVE BOTHERED! MA'S ALREADY WHIPPED UP ONE OF HER FAMOUS BREAKFASTS! COME ON, PULL UP A CHAIR...

... THERE'S NOTHING I LIKE BETTER THAN SITTING DOWN TO A GOOD MEAL WITH MY THREE FAVORITE PEOPLE!



YOU KNOW, I HAVEN'T BEEN SPENDING ENOUGH TIME HERE. I WORRY ABOUT YOU... ALL OF YOU.

UH, WE WORRY ABOUT YOU, TOO.



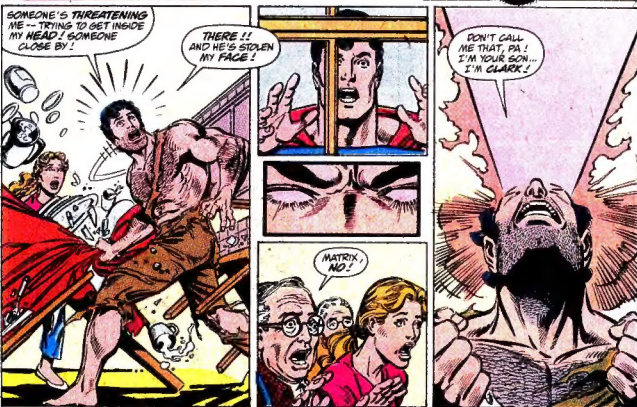
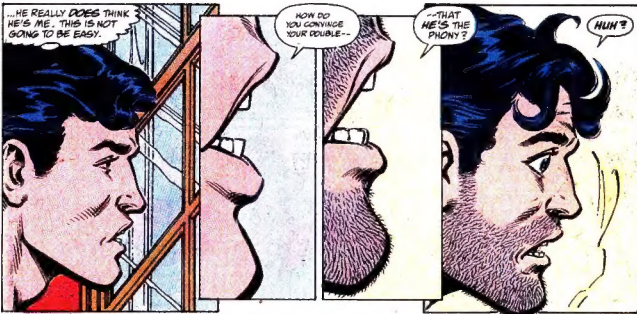
WELL, YOU CAN STOP, PA... YOUR SON IS BACK!

WE... KNOW, DEAR.



I MEAN I'M BACK FOR GOOD! LET METROPOLIS TAKE CARE OF ITSELF... I'M GOING TO STAY HERE AND HELP YOU WORK THE FARM.

LANA WAS RIGHT...

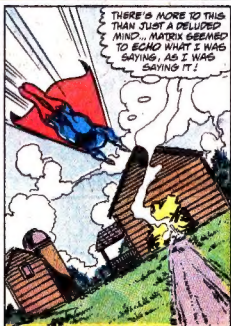




¡LUNGH!

NOTHING'S DIMINISHED MATRIX'S POWER-- BUT HE NEVER MANIFESTED A KINETIC EYE-BLAST BEFORE! THEN AGAIN, HE THINKS HE'S ME...

... THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN AN ATTEMPT TO SIMULATE HEAT VISION.



THERE'S MORE TO THIS THAN JUST A DELUDED MIND... MATRIX SEEMED TO ECHO WHAT I WAS SAYING, AS I WAS SAYING IT!



¡¿!¿! HE'S GONE? I WOULDN'T HAVE EXPECTED HIM TO HIT AND RUN!

MAT? PA? LANA?!



NO SIGN OF THEM... NO SIGN OF ANYBODY, ANYWHERE IN THE HOUSE.



NOTHING LEFT BUT PA'S GLASSES.



MATRIX TOOK THEM ALL AWAY WITH HIM... BUT WHERE?

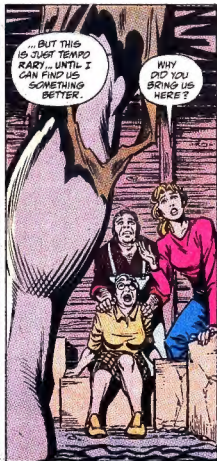


WHERE?!



NO ONE WILL FIND US HERE! THIS OLD QUARRY'S BEEN ABANDONED FOR DECADES.

I KNOW, IT'S A REAL MESS...



... BUT THIS IS JUST TEMPORARY... UNTIL I CAN FIND US SOMETHING BETTER.

WHY DID YOU BRING US HERE?



LANA, LANA, LANA... TO PROTECT YOU FROM MY ENEMIES, OF COURSE! BUT THEY WON'T HURT YOU NOW!

YOU KNOW, WHEN I WAS JUST A BOY AND MY POWERS WERE STILL DEVELOPING, I USED TO SLIP OUT HERE TO PLAY!

NO, YOU DIDN'T!

I BESG YOUR PARDON?



YOU DIDN'T PLAY HERE AS A BOY, BECAUSE YOU NEVER WERE A BOY! YOU'RE NOT CLARK KENT... YOU'VE LIVED WITH THE KENTS FOR ONLY A FEW MONTHS!

LANA, YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE SAYING!



NO, SHE'S TELLING THE TRUTH!

TRY TO REMEMBER, DEAR. YOU'RE SOMEONE ELSE!



WELL, OF COURSE I AM! I HAVE NO SECRETS FROM YOU THREE!

LOOK, I KNOW THAT ATTACK WAS A TERRIBLE SHOCK FOR YOU. TELL US WHAT--



--IF IT'LL MAKE YOU FEEL MORE SECURE, I'LL BECOME THAT "SOMEONE ELSE"!

JONATHAN--!

MATRIX, STOP!

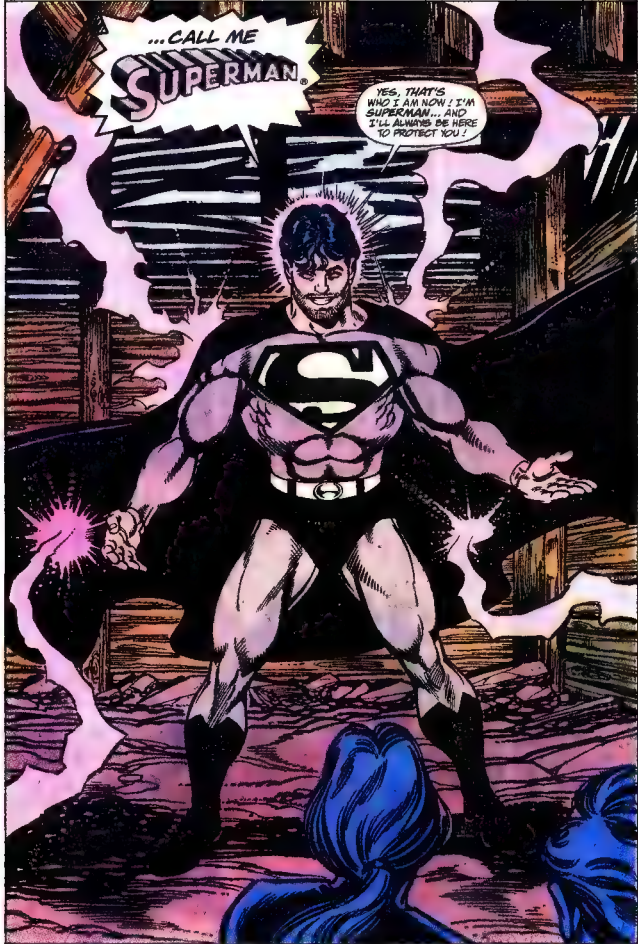


I TOLD YOU NOT TO CALL ME THAT, PA!

CALL ME WHAT THAT REPORTER DID...

...CALL ME
SUPERMAN.

YES, THAT'S
WHO I AM NOW! I'M
SUPERMAN... AND
I'LL ALWAYS BE HERE
TO PROTECT YOU!





MATRIX'S VISION MUST NOT EXTEND BEYOND THE VISIBLE SPECTRUM, OTHERWISE HE'D REALIZE THAT HE LEFT A VERY DISTINCT HEAT TRAIL!

AND IT LEADS RIGHT TO...



PLEASE... BELIEVE ME... WE DON'T NEED YOUR PROTECTION!

PERHAPS NOT THIS MOMENT, BUT YOU HAVE IN THE PAST.



...OF COURSE, THE OLD LIMESTONE QUARRY: I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN!



LEX LUTHOR'S MEN KIDNAPPED AND TORTURED YOU, TRYING TO GET AT ME! I WON'T ALLOW THAT TO HAPPEN AGAIN!

HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT? MR. KENT--?

WE NEVER TOLD 'IM LANA.



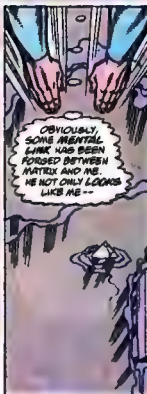
IN A SIMILAR SITUATION, I MIGHT HAVE COME HERE MYSELF.



I KNOW BECAUSE I REMEMBER!

BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! YOU WEREN'T AROUND THEN!

MAYBE WE LOVE YOU DEARLY, BUT YOU AREN'T OUR SON!

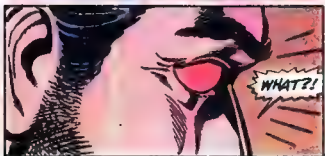


OBVIOUSLY, SOME MENTAL LINK HAS BEEN FORGED BETWEEN MATRIX AND ME. HE NOT ONLY LOOKS LIKE ME--

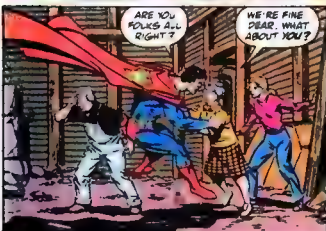
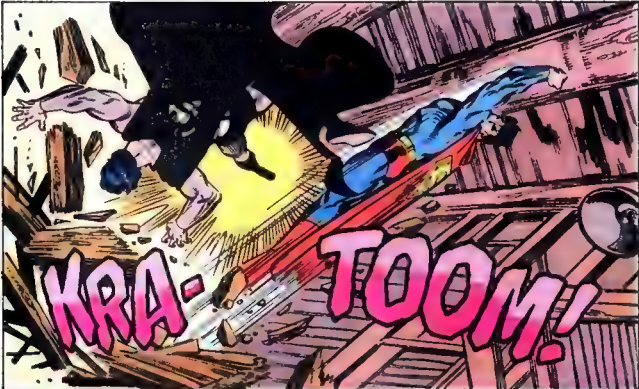


--I WALK, TALK, AND EVEN THINK A LITTLE LIKE SUPERMAN!

SOMEONE THAT DANGEROUS HAS TO BE DEALT WITH QUICKLY!

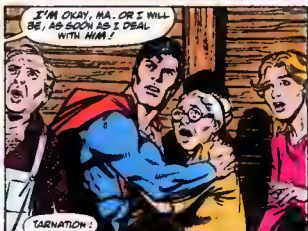


WHAT?!



ARE YOU FOLKS ALL RIGHT?

WE'RE FINE DEAR. WHAT ABOUT YOU?

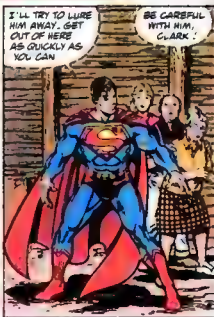


I'M OKAY, MA. OR I WILL BE, AS SOON AS I DEAL WITH HIM!

TARNATION!



STEP AWAY FROM THEM, IMPUDENCE! THIS IS JUST BETWEEN YOU AND ME!



I'LL TRY TO LURE HIM AWAY. GET OUT OF HERE AS QUICKLY AS YOU CAN

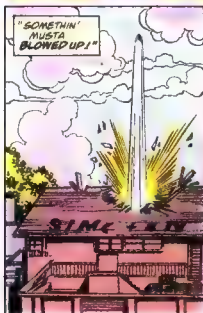
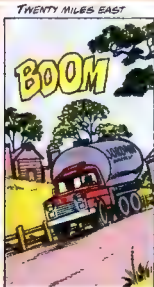
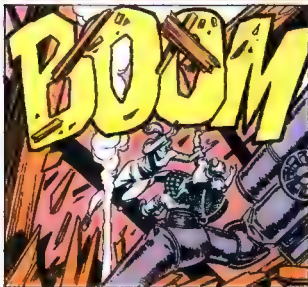
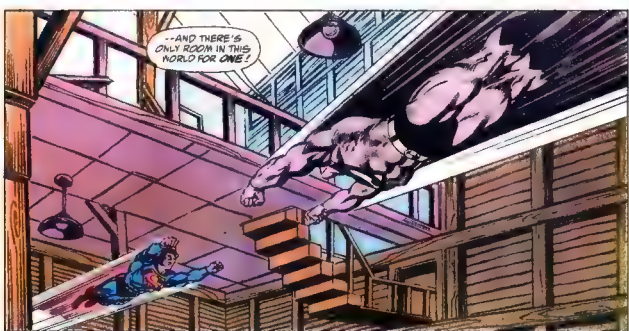
BE CAREFUL WITH HIM, CLARK!



LISTEN, I KNOW YOU'RE CONFUSED--!

NOT AS MUCH AS YOU ARE: I'M THE REAL SUPERMAN--





LOOK, TRY TO REMEMBER...
YOU WERE ALONE IN CLARK
KENT'S APARTMENT... YOU
PICKED UP A KRYPTONIAN
ARTIFACT...

DO YOU
THINK I'M
STUPID?!

THERE ARE NO KRYPTONIAN
ARTIFACTS! KRYPTON WAS
DESTROYED YEARS AGO!

NOTHING SURVIVED
FROM THAT WORLD--

--EXCEPT
ME!

BLAST! I CAN'T PICK UP A
TRACE OF HIM WHEN HE
GOES INVISIBLE!

MATRIX--!

DON'T
CALL ME
THAT!

I'M
TIRED OF
PEOPLE
CALLING ME
THAT!

CAN'T
YOU
SEE?

I'M
SUPER-
MAN!

SUPERMAN!!

WHUD

WHOOM

MEANWHILE, BACK IN METROPOLIS...

RRRRING

RRRING

RRRING

RING... 6/65

HELLO, THIS IS CLARK KENT...

...I CAN'T COME TO THE PHONE RIGHT NOW, BUT IF YOU'LL LEAVE YOUR NAME, NUMBER, AND MESSAGE AFTER THE BEEP--

--I'LL GET BACK TO YOU JUST AS SOON AS I CAN!

!BEEP!

HI, THIS IS KAREN LOU FAULKNER--

--CALLING FROM S.T.A.R. LABS IN PHOENIX... 602-555-7827.

IF THERE'S ANY WAY YOU COULD PUT ME IN TOUCH WITH SUPERMAN, PLEASE GET BACK TO ME.

I HAVE A FRIEND OUT HERE WHO COULD USE HIS HELP. THANKS -- BYE.

WELL, I'VE LEFT MESSAGES FOR PERRY WHITE, LOIS LANE, AND CLARK KENT. THERE WAS NO ANSWER AT PROFESSOR HAMILTON'S... I'LL TRY AGAIN IN A BIT.

I APPRECIATE YOUR GOING TO ALL THIS TROUBLE, DOCTOR.

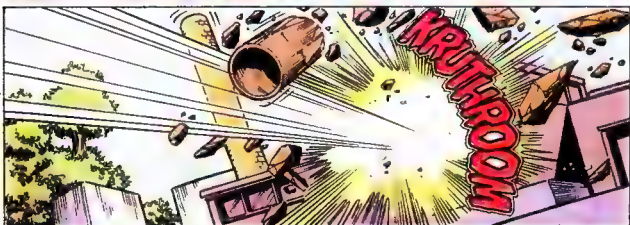
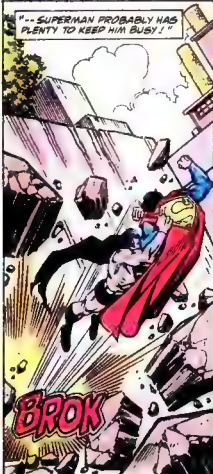
IT'S NO TROUBLE, STARMAN--

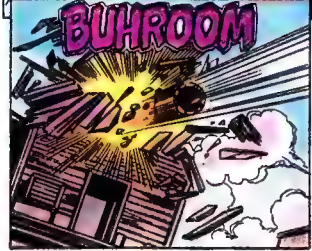
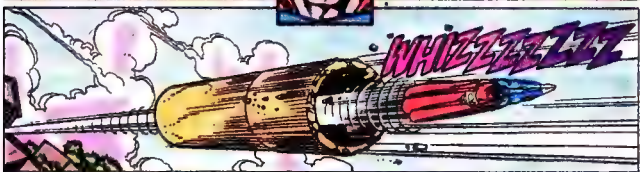
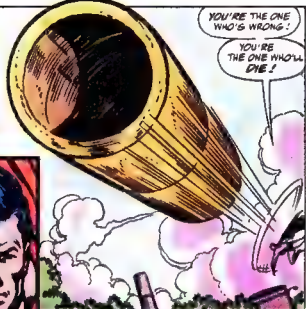
IT'S... ABOUT 9 A.M. YOUR TIME.

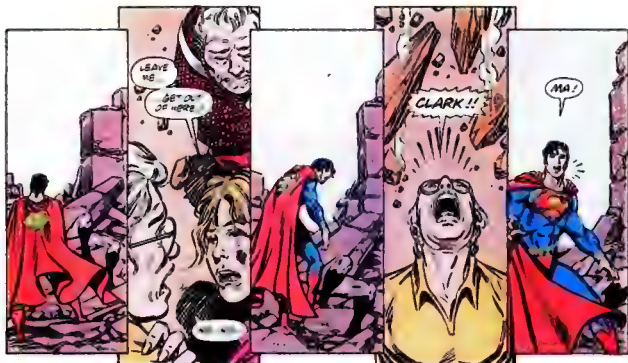
--EVENTUALLY, I'LL FIND SOMEONE WHO CAN CONTACT SUPERMAN. HE HELPED ME... I'M SURE HE CAN HELP YOU.

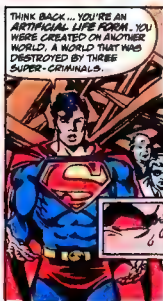
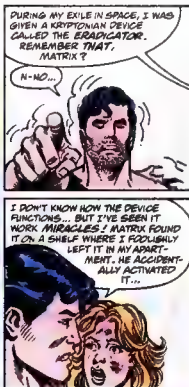
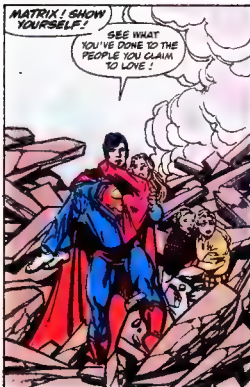
WELL, IF HE CAN'T SPARE THE TIME TO COME TO PHOENIX, I'LL UNDERSTAND--

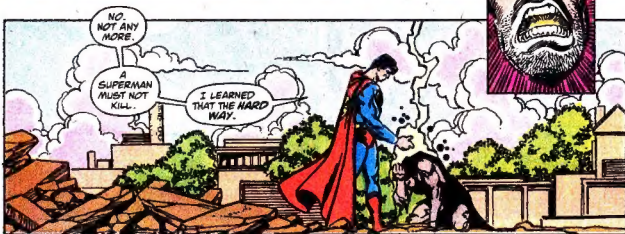
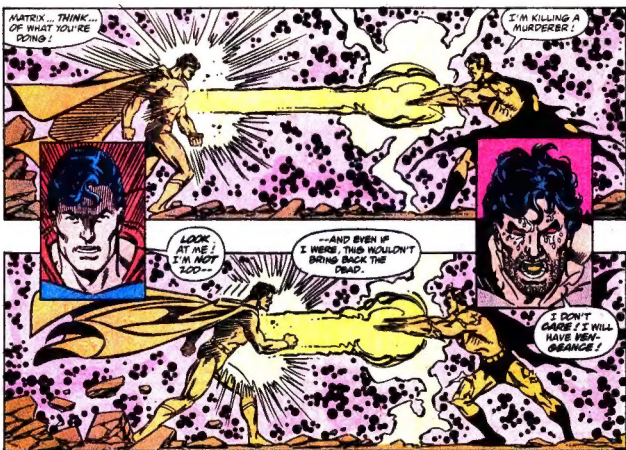
"...SUPERMAN PROBABLY HAS
PLENTY TO KEEP HIM BUSY!"













"I WILL MISS
THIS PLACE."



"THERE ARE SO
MANY GOOD MEM-
ORIES HERE..."

"...SOME OF
THEM ARE EVEN
MY OWN."

BUT MOST
OF THEM ARE
HIS.

GOOD-
BYE, MA...
GOOD-BYE,
PA.

GOOD-BYE,
SMALLVILLE...

"...GOOD-BYE,
EARTH."

HE CAME HERE A STRANGE
VISITOR FROM ANOTHER PLANET--

--AND FOR A SHORT WHILE
HE THOUGHT HE WAS OUR
WORLD'S GREATEST HERO.

BUT IT TAKES MORE THAN A
FIRM JAW AND AWESOME
POWERS TO BE A SUPERMAN.

TODAY, MATRIX
LEARNED WHAT
HE IS NOT.

WE MAY NEVER
SEE HIM AGAIN.

NOW HE GOES TO DIS-
COVER WHAT HE IS.

END



SOOPAH-BEAST, SOOPAH-BEAST!
HE'S SOOPAH-BEASTLY!